

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 15247

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, EGEN, IT

SUBJECT: ORGANIZATIONAL FERMENT IN THE UIL AND CISL

REF: ROME 12378; ROME 11368

1. SUMMARY. THE SOCIALIST PLURALITY IN UIL IS MOUNTING A MAJOR EFFORT TO UNSEAT SECRETARY GENERAL VANNI. THE PLAN, WHICH HAS THE ACTIVE SUPPORT OF PSI SECRETARY CRAXI, CONSISTS OF SEEKING TO WIN OVER AT LEAST SOME OF VANNI'S SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC SUPPORTERS. THE CONTEST WILL LIKELY BE DECIDED WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK. THE CISL SUCCESSION IS ENTERING A CRITICAL STAGE. STORTI'S LIKELY SUCCESSOR, MACARIO, IS SUPPORTING THE LEFT WING CISL LEADER CARNITI FOR THE NUMBER TWO POST. THIS HAS MET WITH STRONG OPPOSITION FROM BOTH THE CISL MINORITY AND THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY. END SUMMARY.

2. IN ADDITION TO MAJOR CHANGES PENDING IN THE TOP LEADER-
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SHIP OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC-ORIENTED LABOR FEDERATION

CISL, IMPORTANT SHIFTS IN THE TRIPARTITE LAY CONFEDERATION UIL ARE ALSO IN PROSPECT. THE UIL SOCIALISTS, WHO CONSTITUTE A PLURALITY IN THE UIL, ARE TAKING DEAD AIM ON SECRETARY GENERAL VANNI (PRI) IN THE HOPE OF PUTTING A SOCIALIST IN HIS PLACE.

3. THE NEW SECRETARY OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY, BETTINO CRAXI, IS CLEARLY PAYING MUCH CLOSER ATTENTION TO THE FORTUNES OF UIL SOCIALISTS THAN DID HIS PREDECESSOR. ACTUALLY, DEMARTINO WAS/IS MORE CLOSELY ATTUNED TO THE SOCIALIST MINORITY IN THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED CGIL WHERE THE TOP SOCIALIST OFFICIALS, SUCH AS BONI AND MARIANETTI, ADHERE TO THE DEMARTINO WING OF THE PSI.

4. AS OUTLINED IN THE CAUCUS OF UIL SOCIALISTS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY (AT WHICH CRAXI IS IN ATTENDANCE), THE STRATEGY IS TO WOO THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS SO AS TO UNSETTLE THE DELICATE REPUBLICAN-SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC BALANCE (AIDED BY THE SIMONCINI MINORITY AMONG THE SOCIALISTS) WHICH SECRETARY GENERAL VANNI HAS SO SKILLFULLY MAINTAINED FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS. THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ARE LISTENING CLOSELY TO THE BLANDISHMENTS; MAKING COMMON CAUSE WITH THE SOCIALISTS WOULD, AFTER ALL, BE IN CONSONANCE WITH WHAT APPEARS TO BE THE TREND IN THE BADLY DECIMATED PSDI ITSELF.

5. EVEN THOUGH THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (AND SIMONCINI) ARE PRIVATELY ASSURING VANNI THAT THEY ARE NOT CONSPIRING TO UNSEAT HIM, HE IS ON NOTICE THAT A MAJOR SOCIALIST EFFORT IS UNDERWAY, AND THAT THIS PLAN ENJOYS UNAMBIGUOUS SUPPORT IN TOP PSI CIRCLES. THE APPARENT SOCIALIST CANDIDATE TO REPLACE VANNI WOULD BE GIORGIO BENVENUTO, CURRENTLY SECRETARY GENERAL OF UIL'S METAL WORKERS UNION, UILM. BENVENUTO, WHO MUST HOLD THE ITALIAN RECORD FOR MEDIA VISIBILITY (HE SEEMS TO BE QUOTED EVERY WEEK IN EVERY ONE OF THE NUMEROUS ITALIAN NEWSWEEKLIES), IS LIKELY TO MOVE INTO THE UIL SECRETARIAT IN ANY EVENT, TO REPLACE LUCIANO RUFINO WHO WAS ELECTED TO THE SENATE. IN PUBLIC, HE IS USUALLY FOUND ON THE LEFT ON MAJOR ISSUES FACING THE LABOR MOVEMENT, WHILE IN PRIVATE HE JUST AS FREQUENTLY EXPRESSES HIS CONCERNS ABOUT COMMUNIST HEGEMONY.

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6. OTHER UIL CHANGES ARE IMPENDING. NATIONAL SECRETARY PINO QUERENGHI (PRI) IS SAID TO BE HEADED FOR A (NEWLY CREATED?) EEC POST OF DIRECTOR OF THE STUDY CENTER FOR LABOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN DUBLIN. NATIONAL SECRETARY ARIDE ROSSI (ALSO PRI) SEEMS HEADED FOR A POST IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, NAMELY, THE MAINTENANCE OF LIAISON BETWEEN THE PRI AND ITS LABOR ADHERENTS.

7. MEANWHILE, THE SUCCESSION AT CISL IS APPROACHING THE MOMENT OF DECISION. WHILE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL LUIGI MACARIO IS VIRTUALLY UNCONTESTED AS STORTI'S SUCCESSOR, AT LEAST UNTIL THE CISL CONGRESS NEXT SPRING, THE REAL BATTLE IS SHAPING UP FOR THE POST OF DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL. THE MAJOR CHANGE SINCE ROME' 12378 IS THAT MACARIO HAS PUBLICLY ESPOUSED THE CANDIDACY OF PIERRE CARNITI. THIS HAS MET WITH CONSIDERABLE OPPOSITION: PAOLO SARTORI, SECRETARY GENERAL OF CISL'S NUMEROUS AGRICULTURAL WORKERS UNION, HAS TOLD MACARIO THAT IF HE PERSISTS IN SPONSORING CARNITI, SARTORI AND THE CISL MINORITY WILL OPPOSE MACARIO FOR THE SECRETARY GENERAL POST. IN ADDITION, WE ARE TOLD BY A CISL INSIDER THAT PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI HAS TOLD STORTI THAT IF CARNITI IS ELECTED DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL, STORTI CAN FORGET ABOUT HIS CHERISHED APPOINTMENT TO THE PRESIDENCY OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS AND LABOR (CNEL). THE CISL SUCCESSION IS UNLIKELY TO BE RESOLVED WITHOUT FIREWORKS.

8. CRAXI'S OBJECTIVE IN THE SOCIALIST POWER PLAY IN THE UIL SEEMS TO BE TO ESTABLISH A DISTINCT, MODERATE POWER BASE FOR SOCIALIST TRADE UNIONISTS CURRENTLY DISPERSED AMONG THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS. THIS WOULD TIE IN WITH CRAXI'S DESIRE GRADUALLY TO REORIENT THE PSI AWAY FROM ITS CURRENT PROXIMITY TO THE PCI WHICH FINDS THE SOCIALISTS AS VIRTUAL SPONSORS OF COMMUNIST ENTRY INTO THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. THIS IS BY NO MEANS THE FIRST SOCIALIST ATTEMPT TO UNSEAT VANNI, AND IF THEY FAIL IN THEIR CURRENT EFFORT -- WHICH IS PROBABLY A GOOD BET, IT WILL NOT BE THEIR LAST. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF THE STRONG PARTY BACKING OF THE CURRENT MOVE, IT POSES A SERIOUS THREAT WHICH VANNI IS SEEKING TO MEET BY CALLING A SERIES OF MEETINGS OF THE UIL MAJORITY, BEGINNING TODAY. THE UIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WILL CONVENE ON SEPTEMBER 22. BEAUDRY

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